



## Water Resources Division's Aquatic Invasive Species of the Week!

FOR THE WEEK OF:

January 13-19, 2014

European Water-Clover

*Marsilea quadrifolia*

**Origin:** Europe and Asia

**Also known as:** Four leaf clover, water shamrock

**Current Distribution:** Isolated sightings in southeast Michigan. Also reported in Ohio, Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri. Widespread occurrences in the northeast US.

**Means of Introduction:** First observed in Connecticut in 1860. Subsequent spread likely through the water garden and aquarium plant trade.

**Description:** Aquatic, rooted fern that grows in shallow and slow-moving waters; resembles a four leaf clover. Reproduces vegetatively and by its sporocarps. Sporocarps are modified leaves containing spores that are able to germinate under favorable conditions.

**Impacts:** Can form dense stands and outcompete native aquatic plants for habitat.

**Interesting Note:** The European water-clover is considered to be anti-inflammatory. It's thought to be a medicinal herb; often used to treat snakebites and abscesses. Note: DEQ is not endorsing this as a form of medical treatment. Seek a medical professional for advice!

For more information on European water-clover, visit the Midwest Invasive Species Information Network website:

[www.misin.msu.edu](http://www.misin.msu.edu)

For more information on Michigan's AIS Program:

[www.michigan.gov/aquaticinvasives](http://www.michigan.gov/aquaticinvasives)



Photos above and below: Leslie J. Mehrhoff, University of Connecticut, Bugwood.org



Up close photo of sporocarps

